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Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

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Wednesday, 13 March 2013, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Churkin/Mr. Iliichev	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Oyarzábal
	Australia	Ms. King
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Briens
	Guatemala	Mr. Briz Gutiérrez
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Morocco	Mr. Bouchaara
	Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Shin Dong Ik
	Rwanda	Mr. Gasana
	Togo	Mr. Menan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

Tenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (S/2013/118)

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13-25736 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

Tenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (S/2013/118)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Sierra Leone to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Samura M.W. Kamara, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen, Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Ambassador Guillermo Rishchynski, Permanent Representative of Canada, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Sierra Leone country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/118, which contains the tenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone.

I now give the floor to Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen.

Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen: I thank the Council for the opportunity to present the tenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (S/2013/118), which is before it.

As members are aware, Sierra Leone held national presidential and parliamentary and local council elections on 17 November 2012. The successful conclusion of those elections demonstrates that Sierra Leone is determined to consolidate its hard-won peace. The country has made significant progress since the end of the war more than a decade ago. During that period, Sierra Leone was able to restore and consolidate State authority, implement national recovery programmes, including the extension of public services, and undertake reforms in the governance and security sectors.

The capacity of vital State institutions that underpin the country's democratic process, such as the National Electoral Commission, the Sierra Leone Police and the Political Parties Registration Commission, has also grown. Adequate law and order is being ensured by the police and security sector agencies throughout the country. The Sierra Leone Police and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces, both of which were restructured after the conflict, now participate in United Nations and regional peacekeeping operations. Sierra Leone also implemented a successful transitional justice and reconciliation process through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

With the Government's national development strategy, the Agenda for Change, about to come to an end, a successor strategy for the next five years, the Agenda for Prosperity, will soon be finalized. With the implementation of the Agenda for Change, Sierra Leone made tangible progress, particularly in the mining and health-care sectors and in infrastructure development. With the beginning of exports of iron ore and the potential for the exploitation of oil and gas, Sierra Leone's economy is expected to expand and to provide the necessary resources in order to address some of its crucial challenges in ensuring improved delivery of services and better standards of living for the citizenry. In that respect, it is vital that the Government continue its efforts to ensure the proper management of the country's mineral wealth and in combating corruption.

Notwithstanding the progress that Sierra Leone has made over the past decade, challenges still remain, particularly in tackling the root causes of the conflict. The political divide and the polarization of the country along regional ethnic lines that manifested themselves in successive elections need to be addressed in order to strengthen national unity and cohesion. Such polarization is further aggravated by the country's winner–takes–all electoral system.

In that respect, I welcome President Koroma's commitment to holding a review of the 1991 Constitution

of Sierra Leone so as to ensure an inclusive system of Government. Such a review will not only provide an opportunity to address the country's regional divide and the many other complex challenges that contributed to the conflict, but also guarantee its continued progress in consolidating the democratic process and in achieving sustainable development. In that regard, it is essential that the planned constitutional review be an inclusive process that ensures the buy-in of all key stakeholders. The Government of Sierra Leone has expressed its desire for international support, in particular from the United Nations, for the constitutional review process both in terms of facilitating political dialogue and mobilizing the necessary financial resources.

Sierra Leone's national institutions, including the justice and security sectors, the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Political Parties Registration Commission and other entities, need to be strengthened in order for them to continue to effectively discharge their respective responsibilities and to win the trust and confidence of the population whom they serve. Further entrenching the rule of law and institutions of democratic governance is the best guarantee for sustaining peace and achieving development and economic prosperity.

Progress in addressing poverty and unemployment, in particular youth unemployment, and in providing essential public services to the population remain serious challenges. The priorities articulated in the Government's Agenda for Prosperity aim to achieve those and other key objectives. In that regard, while the Government takes the lead in attracting private investment and in expanding the country's revenue base to finance those priorities, international assistance and development cooperation will also remain essential to complement national efforts.

As requested by the Council in resolution 2065 (2012), a United Nations inter-agency technical assessment mission visited Sierra Leone in January to develop proposals for the transition, drawdown and exit strategy of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) after holding a wide range of discussions with all representatives of Sierra Leone society.

Sierra Leone's progress is proof of what can be accomplished through concerted multilateral and national efforts in the post–conflict period. With the progress made by Sierra Leone and by UNIPSIL in the implementation of its mandate, it is now appropriate to begin a reconfiguration of the mission and to gradually transfer responsibilities to the United Nations country team, the Government of Sierra Leone, national institutions and civil society organizations, as well as bilateral and international partners. Ultimately, that process will end with the termination of the mission.

As recommended by the Secretary-General in his report, UNIPSIL, in close coordination with the United Nations country team and other partners, should continue to perform three key residual tasks, namely, first, conflict prevention and mediation support for the constitutional review process; secondly, support for security sector reform; and thirdly, support the strengthening of human rights institutions

With respect to the first task, it is critical that UNIPSIL continue to provide support to local stakeholders in stabilizing the post-election political environment. Notwithstanding the outcome of the case filed by the main opposition, the Sierra Leone People's Party, challenging the presidential election results, both opposition and ruling parties must continue to work together in the national interest and for the advancement of the country. In that connection, UNIPSIL intends to engage in political facilitation, mediation and consensus-building around the constitutional review process. The mission will also continue to provide support to the vital national institutions engaged in conflict prevention and mediation, such as the Political Parties Registration Commission.

In the area of support for security sector reform, in order to ensure a smooth and seamless transition from UNIPSIL to the United Nations country team, in collaboration with bilateral partners and the Government, UNIPSIL's tasks will focus on providing overall strategic policy advice and on strengthening the coordination mechanisms for international assistance in the security sector. Furthermore, UNIPSIL will provide support in strengthening the governance and the command and control mechanisms of the Sierra Leone police, as well as in improving efforts to address cross-border threats and transnational and organized crime, in particular drug trafficking.

Finally, as directed by the Secretary-General, UNIPSIL will continue to support the strengthening of national human rights and rule-of-law institutions. That will continue to be a critical priority for the country.

Under the planned transitional arrangements there will be a gradual reduction of the tasks performed by the mission as of 1 April until the end of its mandate. In anticipation of a refocused mandate, UNIPSIL and the United Nations country team are developing drawdown proposals that will be completed by the end of March. Those proposals envisage staffing reductions, the transfer of the mission's archives to United Nations Headquarters and the liquidation of its assets. UNIPSIL and the United Nations country team will further prepare a timeline and benchmarks for the transition of all outstanding tasks. Technical and financial resources will be critical to guaranteeing a smooth transition to the United Nations country team. In that regard, I call on the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission and international partners to assist in providing such resources.

The transition of UNIPSIL to the United Nations country team represents a moment that Sierra Leone and the international community can take pride in. The strong commitment of the people of Sierra Leone and its successive post-conflict Governments has been indispensable to the achievements made by the country and to the successful work of the United Nations over the last 15 years. However, I must caution that challenges remain which call for greater efforts by national stakeholders and the international community's continued engagement. It is therefore incumbent on all of us to get the transition right.

This involves not only the planned phasing out of UNIPSIL, but equally the scaling up of the United Nations and other international partners' support for the continued development of Sierra Leone. That will require the timely mobilization of resources. With a successful transition and UNIPSIL's exit, it is also important to make it clear that the United Nations will remain in Sierra Leone and continue to support Sierra Leone through the United Nations country team and with the assistance of its international partners.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Rishchynski.

Mr. Rishchynski (*spoke in French*): On behalf of all the members of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), I should like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to speak.

(*spoke in English*)

The Peacebuilding Commission recently conducted a joint delegation visit to Sierra Leone and Liberia, in late February. We are deeply grateful for the warm welcome we received from the Government of Sierra Leone, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and the entire United Nations family. We would also like to thank the representatives of Australia, Bangladesh, Egypt, Kuwait, Japan, Sweden and the United Kingdom for their participation. We believe that the composition of this delegation demonstrates the PBC's continued determination to sustain international support for Sierra Leone. The timing of the visit was also opportune. The Government of Sierra Leone in the midst of articulating its priorities for the next five years. The arrival of our mission soon after the recent United Nations technical assessment mission also allowed for an informed consideration of the forthcoming transition process. We would like to offer five observations based on the deliberations undertaken in the country.

First, Sierra Leone should be commended for the very successful conduct of its elections in November 2012. The process was exceptionally peaceful, technically well organized and characterized by a high voter turnout. It demonstrated the growing capacity of Sierra Leone's national institutions and marked the crossing of a significant peacebuilding threshold. In this respect, the Government's emerging priorities for the Agenda for Prosperity also reflect a welcome shift in emphasis towards fostering economic growth, improving social services and building human capital. Sierra Leone is developing a strategy to address its next priority development challenges and can look to the future with optimism.

Secondly, notwithstanding those positive developments, several challenges remain. During our visit, His Excellency President Koroma, all major political parties, the relevant national authorities and civil society actors raised with us concerns about the winner-take-all nature of Sierra Leone's political system and the clear regional divide produced by the recent election. For this reason, President Koroma has indicated his intention to undertake a much-delayed review of the Constitution, as originally proposed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. While this politically sensitive process must be fully inclusive and national in character, it also offers an important

opportunity to modernize a range of human rights and civil provisions in that document.

(*spoke in French*)

Thirdly, several outstanding issues will require effort over the longer term. Youth unemployment is a major challenge, but generating economic opportunities and rebuilding an effective educational system can only come from sustained Government investment. Likewise, the growth of Sierra Leone's extractive and agricultural sectors offers great promise. At the same time, a wide range of interlocutors expressed growing concern about the potential for conflict at the community level if large-scale investments are not managed carefully. Like its neighbours in the subregion, Sierra Leone is vulnerable to the destabilizing aspects of transnational organized crime and drug trafficking. This leads us to the evident conclusion that now is not the time for the international community to turn away from Sierra Leone. Our continued assistance will be required to build on the gains achieved to date.

Fourthly, the United Nations is viewed in a positive light in Sierra Leone. That is a testament to the central role played by successive missions in the peacebuilding process. It also speaks to the need for a measured transition. Our visit corroborated the technical assessment mission's findings that many of UNIPSIL's current activities could be transferred to other actors, but it also highlighted the need for continued dialogue and political cooperation in a few specific areas.

Specifically, many stakeholders stressed the importance of UNIPSIL's assistance to the constitutional review process and the need to continue providing technical support to the security sector. Above all, the pace of transition should match the needs on the ground, especially given the potential for small investments at this late stage to make a substantial contribution to consolidating the hard-won peace. Without advocating for any undue delay, the international community must resist the temptation to prematurely declare victory. Equally important, the nature of the United Nations transition in Sierra Leone must be communicated clearly to all national stakeholders.

(*spoke in English*)

Fifthly, there is a regional dimension to many of the challenges facing Sierra Leone. The Governments of the Mano River Union have invested new resources in the institution, leading to a corresponding increase in international cooperation and cross-border activities. The relevant configurations of the PBC intend to assess how they can further encourage those efforts. This situation also points to the need for United Nations political engagement at the regional level after UNIPSIL has completed its mandate.

Finally, allow me to conclude with a few remarks on the Peacebuilding Commission itself. In the near term, the configuration for Sierra Leone will turn its attention to supporting the transition process, including by advocating for any necessary resources to fill gaps created by UNIPSIL's drawdown. In the longer term, the PBC will need to align its engagement with the Government of Sierra Leone's new priorities in the Agenda for Prosperity. As ever, those efforts will move forward in close partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations.

Rest assured that I intend to keep the Security Council fully informed of the configuration's work. We look forward to further opportunities for cooperation with the Council.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Rishchynski for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Kamara (Sierra Leone): Let me start by thanking all present for having agreed to reschedule this meeting, at our request. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

I bring you greetings, Mr. President, with profound appreciation, from His Excellency President Ernest Bai Koroma on behalf of the Government and people of Sierra Leone for the continued support and unfailing interest of the Council, the wider membership of the United Nations and our international partners towards consolidating peace and security in Sierra Leone and supporting our socioeconomic development aspirations. I also apologize for the unavoidable absence of my colleague, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice. Please also accept our hearty congratulations to you, Sir, for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March 2013. We thank you for giving our delegation the opportunity to contribute to this briefing on the situation in Sierra Leone.

We were privileged to hear a while ago the presentation by Executive Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen, of the tenth report

of the Secretary-General (S/2013/118) on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), for the period 1 September 2012 to 28 February 2013, including key findings by the technical assessment mission, which visited Sierra Leone from 14 to 25 January 2013. The report clearly outlines key achievements and remaining challenges. We wish to thank the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and to also express our appreciation for the excellent manner in which UNIPSIL continues to partner and cooperate with the Government and people of Sierra Leone in the delivery of its mandate. The United Nations in Sierra Leone, under his leadership as Resident Coordinator, continues to provide immense technical support while allowing us to take the lead in project selection, approval and monitoring.

Equally important is the very instructive briefing we have just heard from the Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Guillermo Rishchynski of Canada, on his recent visit to Sierra Leone in February. He underscores the progress made in addressing key peacebuilding priorities and the need for enduring support, particularly in the areas of youth unemployment and empowerment; building human capital; improving the justice system, including the security sector; energy, management of natural resources, agriculture and food security; the constitutional review process; and the need for strong, private-sector-led growth that could translate into more tangible peace dividends.

We also wish to convey our sincere thanks and appreciation to the members of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission through Ambassador Guillermo Rishchynski, as Chair, for the relentless commitment and strong support they continue to demonstrate in the pursuit of peace and security in Sierra Leone. In particular, we note with appreciation his interest, together with members of the configuration, in the post-election political outlook of Sierra Leone, including the support required of the configuration, UNIPSIL and the agencies and programmes towards a well-planned and equally well-managed seamless transition to a more development-focused phase of peacebuilding, as well as his views on future support to Sierra Leone's political and economic priorities.

Sierra Leone stands at the crossroads at this stage of its peacebuilding journey. The decision as to whether to draw down UNIPSIL or not should take into account the challenges already outlined by the Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Government of Sierra Leone, the technical assessment team's report and the report under consideration.

In other words, the process should be guided by factors on the ground. In that regard, the immediate and future consequences should be weighed, given the present situation in the country and its immediate neighbourhood. Furthermore, there is a need to seriously consider the transition to a strong and well-resourced Resident Coordinator system, in terms of the much-needed technical expertise and funds, within a time frame that avoids any gaps or hiccups along the way.

We do not desire to be on the agenda of the Council indefinitely, but the existing circumstances are such that we see the need to prevail upon the Council to be guided in its decisions on this sensitive and complex matter by the prevailing circumstances in Sierra Leone and the subregional dimensions. Of course, we share the honour and glory of success, but also the blame and responsibility for decisions that may prove wrong and untimely. We are entirely in the Council's hands and prepared to submit to the collective wisdom of the Council in taking any crucial decision on the matter.

In taking forward our development aspirations and addressing residual peacebuilding, security and democratization issues, we look forward to the support of UNIPSIL, even if it has to move into a phase of transition. We therefore urge that any transition process should be carefully thought out to the extent that due consideration is given to the short-term and long-term impact on the gains made thus far. In that regard, we stand ready to partner with the United Nations, the Peacebuilding Commission and development partners in mapping out and implementing a smooth and seamless transition process from UNIPSIL to the normal United Nations esident Coordinator system as and when necessary.

Today, we share the accolades in celebrating another milestone in the consolidation of peace and security in Sierra Leone through the conduct of successful, violence-free, fair, transparent and credible elections, which are considered to be a critical benchmark signalling Sierra Leone's preparedness to move into a more development-focused phase of peacebuilding. That means that the democratic process is progressively gaining firm footing as we position ourselves for a

smooth and seamless transition from the Agenda for Change to the Agenda for Prosperity, which is tailored to the spirit and purpose of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, agreed in Busan, Republic of Korea, by the Group of Seven Plus countries. In that connection, I wish to express thanks and appreciation to all of our friends and partners for their timely contributions to the United Nations Development Programme basket fund. I would like to particularly thank the leadership of the Peacebuilding Support Office and staff for their confidence and trust in making a huge investment in our peacebuilding journey.

This year marks the eleventh year since the conflict in Sierra Leone was officially declared over. Since then, with the support of the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and international partners, remarkable progress has been made in charting the path towards a peaceful, secure, democratic Sierra Leone and its future prosperity. As we commend ourselves for the gains made, some of which are quite irreversible, it is crucial that, together, we continue to tackle the remaining challenges in order to further advance and consolidate comprehensively our peacebuilding priorities aimed at building resilience. Key among them is the increasing need to address the economic, social and governance challenges to match the growing expectations of Sierra Leoneans. As already stated by the Chair of the configuration, several of those challenges are long-term in nature and will require sustained effort over a substantial period of time, since much will depend on the global economic scenario and the overall subregional security climate.

I am happy to report that tremendous progress is being made in setting up the required structures to address the three risk areas of youth unemployment and empowerment; good governance and the rule of law; and drug trafficking and organized crime, which were identified in our Agenda for Change and endorsed by the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. Sustained international support is, however, required to fully address the challenges that we continue to face at the national and subregional levels.

On the socioeconomic and development front, we remain committed to the strong partnership link that exists between Sierra Leone, the United Nations and the donor community. It is within that context that Sierra Leone's experience is considered a best practice in donor coordination and a success story in peacebuilding. In that regard, we stress the need for the international community to continue to invest in our success by supporting and aligning with our Agenda for Prosperity, which, as stated earlier, is anchored in the Busan New Deal on aid effectiveness, as well as to recognize the need for special attention to be paid to countries emerging from conflict, Sierra Leone being one of the pilot countries. The Agenda for Prosperity, which is currently in the final stages of completion and which includes broader national and development partner consultations and buy-in, has as its main focus taking Sierra Leone beyond the phase of peacebuilding to being a more secure, peaceful, developed and responsible member of the community of nations. It aims to build a sustainable future for all Siena Leoneans, including the young and the old, the strong and the frail, the physically challenged, the marginalized and disempowered, the majority and the minority.

In his statement at the fourth opening of Parliament, President Koroma clearly articulated his commitment to putting Sierra Leone on the path to sustainability and resilience. To that end, we will continue to engage all stakeholders, including political parties and civil society organizations, with a view to encouraging and promoting national reconciliation, political dialogue and an all-inclusive governance system, including a constitutional review to address major political and social issues, as well as gender equity. In the constitutional review process, we will anchor in critical analysis and broad-based national debate on the weak or negative indicators that characterize such areas as the rule of law, national unity, cohesion, inclusive governance and social justice.

However, support from our international partners to assist the Government in strengthening key national democratic institutions — such as the Political Parties Registration Commission, the Independent Media Commission, the National Commission for Democracy, the National Electoral Commission, the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone and the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation — remains of paramount significance. The high-level steering committee comprised of elections basket fund partners, elections-related agencies, the Sierra Leone Police, the justice sector, civil society and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, which effectively guided and monitored funding and activities for the 2012 elections,

will continue its work in the post-elections period ahead.

In line with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict in Sierra Leone, the Government continues to collaborate with all national stakeholders and the United Nations in promoting the enactment of the gender-equality bill to enhance women's participation in decision-making processes. Those were also well articulated in the President's statement during the State opening of Parliament, and reiterated in his address to the women of Sierra Leone during the celebration of International Women's Day, when he said "Women are on the march — the whole country is on the march to gender equity — there shall be no retreat". The President has also declared 8 March every year as National Women's Day.

In taking forward our development aspirations and addressing residual peacebuilding issues, we look forward to the support of UNIPSIL, even as it moves into the uncharted course of its transition. Let me therefore conclude by assuring members of the Council, the Secretary-General, the PBC and the wider United Nations membership of the Government's readiness, willingness and interest in cooperating with the Council's decision directed at ensuring a smooth and seamless transition from UNIPSIL to a Resident Coordinator system that will eventually mark a successful outcome of UNIPSIL's mission and, in general, United nations intervention in peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Sierra Leone. We therefore urge that the transition process should be carefully managed to the extent that due consideration be given to the short-term and long-term impact on the gains made so far.

Finally, I commend the United Nations and our international partners for the support provided towards the completion of the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which has equally contributed immensely to peacebuilding by sending a strong sign of an end to impunity.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.